

Opening remarks of House Speaker Becky Lockhart:

Like many University of Utah students, Mattie Hughes was a firebrand. She was outspoken and passionate. She was independent -- washing dishes, doing laundry and secretarial jobs to work her own way through school.

She majored in Chemistry, and at age 25 launched her career as a doctor.

Today, she'd blend in among the U's 30,000 students. Except that "Mattie" Hughes went to school in the 1880s and the school was known then as the University of Deseret.

Hughes would go on to establish a training school for nurses, become a resident physician and marry Angus Munn Cannon. We now know her as Martha Hughes Cannon. She was drawn to politics, and felt so strongly about the issues of her day that she ran for office against her own husband in 1896. She defeated him and became the first woman in our nation to be elected to a State senate.

Martha Cannon may not have recognized the significance of her influence, but surely we recognize it now: She was a leader. She was the kind of leader who helped build this great State into the envy of our Nation: A safe environment for parents and their children. Fertile ground for businesses and their jobs. A desirable destination for visitors and their dreams.

Today, at the opening of the 59th Legislature ask yourselves: How can we be effective legislators? How can we be leaders?

A leader learns to navigate the legislative process. A leader reads the bills that come before him. A leader listens more than talks. A leader is a good example. A leader is respectful to Utah citizens who take the time to approach him on an issue.

Leaders are elected to understand the proper role of government and meet the looming challenges facing our State. In Utah, there is a legacy from past legislatures filled with many accolades including best managed State in America. However, we cannot just stand on the accomplishments of the past in order to build Utah's future. There is too much at stake. The decisions we make today will affect the generations of tomorrow. Our children and grandchildren will reap the consequences of our actions. As a State we face real challenges. We must address our challenges head on. When we do that, we enable our posterity to create their own bright future.

Over the next seven weeks, we will debate immigration reform and health care reform. We will address an economy that needs less government, not more while it recovers. We have an education system that needs attending to and a dangerous \$300 million problem known as structural imbalance.

There are fundamental principles upon which this country was founded. Federalism and State sovereignty. Our inspired United States Constitution limits the powers of Federal

Government. Are there instances when the federal government intrudes upon our State sovereignty? Is Utah willing to tell the federal government to go away at times when it oversteps its authority? Are we willing to heed the advice of Thomas Jefferson, who said "A government big enough to supply you with everything you need, is a government big enough to take away everything that you have"? I believe that together we can find answers to these questions.

Because we come from all walks of life, we have different world views and different ideas for solutions. On one hand we have Representative Cox. Our newest member has been a representative for just two weeks and has yet to debate a bill, much less vote on one. On the other hand is Representative Hendrickson, who has been around for over 1,000 weeks and has cast tens of thousands of votes.

We have Representative Mathis, whose district is responsible for most of Utah's oil and gas production. And we have Representative Wiley, who actually produces and uses his own bio-diesel. Our youngest members -- Representatives Ryan Wilcox and Jeremy Peterson could double their ages and still be younger -- excuse me -- less distinguished than our indomitable Representatives Kay McIlff and Mel Brown. These differences give us strength as leaders and as a legislative body.

And so I encourage lively, energetic and passionate debate. I invite principled stands and the expression of deeply held convictions. I encourage you to be advocates and allies. But above all I encourage you to be statesmen and stateswomen. Because whether you find yourself soaring from victory or grounded in defeat, remember that the people who surround you in this chamber are your colleagues, your friends, your legislative family. We'll have our differing points of view -- but never forget the bonds that unite us to work for policies that benefit the people of Utah. This Capitol and the legislative process will continue long after we are gone, but for this moment we serve together as Utah Representatives within these hallowed walls. It is our obligation to craft the policy and appropriate a budget that is best for the citizens of our great State.

While you're walking the corridors of power and being courted by the powerful you need to remember how you got here. You were chosen to lead by farmers and mechanics, attorneys and doctors, software programmers, teachers, and homemakers.

Even more than the respect we give each other, these constituents have the right to our time and attention. They have a right to an explanation for why we vote the way we do. They have a right to know how the laws we pass will affect them and their children, and future generations.

It was Mattie Hughes Cannon's eye toward future generations that made her work so hard 120 years ago. Mother, suffragette, doctor, wife and politician, she led the way for all of us.

On this, the opening day of Utah's 59th Legislature, I encourage you to consider your responsibilities as a leader. Ponder your commitment to the people of Utah. Let the

history books record that this House of Representatives fearlessly faced difficult issues, carefully resolved fiscal problems and faithfully upheld cherished Utah values.

Thank you.